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**MONTANA
human
rights
COMMISSION**



THOMAS L. JUDGE
GOVERNOR OF MONTANA

RAYMOND D. BROWN
ADMINISTRATOR
HUMAN RIGHTS DIVISION

• TELEPHONE 406/449-2884

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING

- No you haven't missed an issue! Due to financial constraints we have not been able to publish this newsletter quarterly.
- Five new VISTA volunteers have been recruited for Human Rights work: two attorneys, two paralegals, and one outreach worker.
- The intake information which precedes investigation is now being taken by a CETA-funded Public Service Employee.
- **NEW COMMISSION CHAIRPERSON AND MEMBERS:** Dee Storm of Forsyth, will chair Commission meetings and new members appointed by the Governor are Karen Townsend of Missoula, and Peg Krivec of Billings. They join incumbents Lee Topash of Helena and Dave Fuller of Helena.
- The current backlog of cases has reached an all time high (200). In an attempt to resolve cases more quickly the Division is:
- developing an early resolution process to resolve complaints within thirty days;
 - proposing four new investigators through CETA Title VI funds.

Cause of Discrimination

Area of Discrimination

___ Creed or Religion
 ___ Age
 ___ Sex
 ___ Race, national origin, or color
 ___ Handicap, physical or mental
 ___ Political belief (state only)
 ___ Marital Status

___ Employment
 ___ Training or education
 ___ Housing
 ___ Public accommodations
 ___ Financing
 ___ Government services
 ___ Retaliation (for Human Rights activity)

NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS

COMMISSION MEETING

The September meeting of the Human Rights Commission:

- agreed to give emergency housing complaints priority investigation due to the difficulty in proving these allegations months after they have occurred.
- agreed to schedule 24 hearings per year.

CETA CONTRACT

The Information and Outreach Unit has completed its contract with the Governor's Employment and Training Council and in combination with other staff has made seventeen public contracts this fiscal year.

INCREASE IN COMPLAINTS

Fiscal year 1977 (ended June 30) showed an increase in complaints filed with the Division of 50% over the previous year.

LARGEST SETTLEMENT AWARDED

The largest settlement in Montana Human Rights history was awarded to a Warm Springs woman. Theresa Hirshenberger received \$13,880.52 in back pay and a job offer following a sex discrimination complaint which she filed in June of 1976. Agreement was reached with the Respondent in August.

RETIREMENT RULING IMPACT

Word has been received by the Division that several Montana businesses have changed their retirement policies due to the recent decision by the Commission regarding mandatory retirement.

PROGRESS

- Fiscal year 1977 showed conciliated settlements amounted to \$104,427 (annualized according to EEOC guidelines).
- Native American received job and back pay of \$13,936 (annualized).
- Restraining Order issued to Anaconda Company prohibiting termination of an employee because of marriage to another employee.
- Radio and television public service announcements have been taped and are in circulation.
- A woman who was terminated because of pregnancy was reinstated with a back pay award of \$860.00 and company policy was changed.
- Indian students in public school had all indications of suspensions removed from school records because the previous policy had operated to discriminate against Indians. A new suspension policy was adopted.
- One possible provider of public accommodations opened its door to epileptics on an equal basis.



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